

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

TOM DAVIS, CHAIRMAN



MEDIA ADVISORY

For Immediate Release
May 17, 2005

Contact: Dave Marin/Robert White
(202) 225-5074

GOVERNMENT REFORM COMMITTEE TO HOLD HEARING ON NATIONAL BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION AND USE OF STEROIDS

**What: Government Reform Committee Oversight Hearing:
“Steroid Use in Sports Part III: Examining the National Basketball
Association’s Steroid Testing Program”**

When: THURSDAY, MAY 19, 2005 at 9:30 A.M.

Where: ROOM 2154, RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

IMPORTANT NOTE: Any member of the press seeking to cover the hearing must RSVP to the appropriate press gallery. Please provide the names and contact information (including email if possible) to the galleries listed below:

Print Press Gallery – (202) 225-3945

Radio and TV Gallery – (202) 225-5214

Periodical Press Gallery – (202) 225-2941

Press Photographers’ Gallery – (202) 224-6548

Background:

This hearing will consider the National Basketball Association’s (NBA) steroid policy; how the testing policy is implemented; how effectively it addresses the use of prohibited drugs by players; and the larger societal and public health ramifications of steroid use. This hearing is part of the Committee’s ongoing work and its third hearing in a series on steroid use in professional sports.

Recent public statements by NBA players and personnel suggest that steroids are not a problem in professional basketball, and the use of such drugs do not provide a benefit to basketball players. Dallas Maverick team physician, Dr. Tarek Souryal told ESPN.com that, “Steroids is really a factor in power sports. Football. Baseball if you’re a power hitter. You’re not going to see it in . . . basketball. When you’re playing every other night for 82 games, endurance is really what you’re after, and steroids actually hurt that.” San

Antonio's Tony Massenburg, and Memphis' Shane Battier have commented publicly that steroid use is not a problem in the NBA, as it is hard enough to get players to hit the weight room. "You don't want to be naïve, but we have our own issues, and steroids is not one of them," stated Orlando's Grant Hill.

The Chicago Bulls' Antonio Davis, who serves on the National Basketball Players Association's (NBPA) executive board recognizes there is an even bigger issue than whether NBA players are actively using steroids. "I think we have a responsibility to high school kids, junior high kids, college kids . . . to show them it's hard work that's going to get them there, not cheating and tearing up your body," Davis said. NBA Commissioner David Stern has stated publicly that " . . . [the NBA], as a league, want kids to look up to us, to do what we do, to follow us." "It's not a problem at the present time that we think we have," Stern said. "But it's a potent issue . . . and we think it would be smart to deal with it."

The Committee is interested in hearing more about the claim that steroid use and basketball proficiency are incompatible. The Committee will also ask why – if the NBA does, in fact, not face a steroid problem – its testing policy is not stronger. NBA and NBPA are currently in negotiations on their collective bargaining agreement. At the hearing, the Committee expects witnesses to address the upcoming changes that may be made to the NBA steroid testing policy.

Witnesses:

Mr. David Stern, Commissioner, National Basketball Association

Mr. Richard W. Buchanan, Senior Vice President and General Counsel, National Basketball Association

Mr. William Hunter, Executive Director, National Basketball Players Association

Mr. Keith Jones, Vice President of Operations and Trainer, Houston Rockets

Mr. Juan Dixon, NBA Player, Washington Wizards

###